

Remarks

Claims 1-21 are pending; claims 1-7, 14-16, and 20 are rejected; and claims 8-13, 17-19, and 21 are indicated allowable. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating the allowable claims.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-9, 11, 13, 14, 16-18, 20, and 21 are amended; claims 3, 4, 6, 10, 15 are cancelled; other claims remain unchanged.

Claim rejections under 35 USC 102(b)

Claims 1-6, 14-16, and 20 are rejected under 36 USC 102(b). In response, applicant has amended independent claims 1, 16, and 20 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that applicant regards as the invention. For example, amended claim 1 recites the following:

“An audio/video apparatus having first and second modes of operation and capable of receiving a broadcast audio signal, the apparatus comprising:
first (AUX1) and second (AUX2) audio inputs for receiving first and second audio signals;
a switch arrangement for selecting one of the first audio signal, the second audio signal, and the broadcast audio signal; and
an audio output for outputting the selected audio signal, wherein
in the first mode of operation where power necessary to operate the audio/video apparatus is applied to the audio/video apparatus, the switch arrangement selects one of the first audio signal, the second audio signal, and the broadcast audio signal in response to a user command, and in the second mode of operation where the power is not applied to the audio/video apparatus causing the audio/video apparatus inoperable, the switch arrangement defaults to a predetermined position to select one of the first and second audio signals.” (Emphasis added.)

The underlined feature is to solve a problem that occurs in an environment where a hi-fi amplifier as an example is connected to the audio output of a main audio/video apparatus, such as a television, and different audio

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apparatuses are connected to inputs of the main audio/video apparatus, so that the different audio apparatuses can share the hi-fi amplifier through the main audio/video apparatus. The problem is that when the main audio/video apparatus has been unplugged causing the main audio/video inoperable, the main audio/video apparatus does not generate an audio output and a user would have to reconnect the output of an audio apparatus originally connected to the audio input of the main audio/video apparatus directly to the hi-fi amplifier. This underlined feature enables such a sharing, even if the main audio/video apparatus has no operating power applied and is inoperable. Applicant submits that amended claim 1 is novel and inventive because US6,034,737 ("Koyama") does not disclose or suggest an audio/video apparatus having at least the underlined feature.

Although Koyama in FIG. 3 discloses that the AV amplifier 40 can select one of the broadcast audio signal and two other audio inputs, Koyama does not address the situation when power necessary to operate the audio/video apparatus is not applied to the AV amplifier 40. As such, Koyama fails to disclose or suggest at least the underlined feature.

This is not surprising because Koyama provides a completely different solution. While the present invention provides sharing of an audio amplifier (as an example) between a main audio/video apparatus (may be interpreted as the claimed audio/video apparatus) and other audio devices through the main audio/video apparatus itself, Koyama teaches sharing of an audio amplifier by connecting the audio output of each audio/video apparatus (including the television) directly to the audio amplifier without going through the television. As such, Koyama does not have to consider the scenario in which the television is unplugged.

In light of the fact that Koyama does not disclose or suggest at least the feature of in the second mode of operation where the power necessary to operate the audio/video apparatus is applied to the audio/video apparatus causing the audio/video apparatus inoperable, the switching arrangement defaulting to a predetermined position to select one of the first and second

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audio signals, as recited in amended claim 1, amended claim 1, and dependent claims 2, 5, 7-9, 11-14, are patentable over Koyama.

Since amended claims 16 and 20 recite a second mode similar to that recited in amended claim 1, claims 16 and 20, and their respective dependent claim(s), are patentable over Koyama for similar reasons discussed above with respect to amended claim 1.

Claim rejections under 35 USC 103

Claim 7 is rejected as being unpatentable over Koyama. Since Koyama does not disclose or suggest every element recited in amended claim 1, from which claim 7 depends, claim 7 is patentable at least for its dependence from claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks/arguments, the Applicants believe this application stands in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner is of the opinion that such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' attorney at (609) 734-6813, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled.

Fee

Except the one-month extension fee, applicant believes that no other fee has been incurred by virtue of this amendment. However if another fee is incurred on the basis of this amendment, please also charge such fee against deposit account 07-0832

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